



Preserving Yesterday Enriches Tomorrow



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MADISON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 467, Madison, Virginia 22727

November 2007



Graves Mill Grist Mill

DOUG GRAVES TO SPEAK

Doug Graves, a resident of Madison County, will speak at the November 18, 2007 meeting of the Madison County Historical Society. The subject of his talk will be his research into the historic Graves Mill and surrounding area and the renovation of the Graves Mill Grist Mill.

The mill is a late 18th century structure, originally constructed by Doug's 5th great-grandfather, Thomas Graves, of Graves Mill. The structure was recently placed upon the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The talk will include interesting photos and relics relating to the mill.

Doug's roots are deep within Madison and Orange Counties, his father having been born in Rochelle and his mother born in Rapidan, Culpeper County, and growing up in the town of Orange. In 1986 he purchased the home of his great uncle and aunt in Graves Mill, Virginia. By

1993 he had completed renovation of this home, retired from the Fairfax County police department and become a full time resident of Graves Mill.

Doug's presentation and talk is extremely interesting and enlightening lending itself to the very essence of a vital part of the early history of Madison County. It also depicts one of the essential necessities of this early period in our history and how it provided for the livelihood of communities.

The meeting will be at 2:00pm in the auditorium of the Madison County Administration building and will be followed by refreshments in the Kemper Residence next door.



Ellwood at Wilderness Battlefield

MEMBERS VISIT ELLWOOD

Members of the Historical Society gathered at historic Ellwood located in the Wilderness Battlefield area on Sunday, August 18th. After a tour provided of the house, members strolled the

grounds, viewing the gardens, outbuildings and the marker for the burial site of General Thomas Jackson's arm.

William Jones built Ellwood in the 1790's and he or his descendants would own the place for the next century. In 1907 it was purchased by Hugh Willis, a law professor who installed his parents in the house. In 1977 the house was purchased by the government and is now operated by the National Park Service as part of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial, a National Military Park .



Members view the exhibits

As can be seen in the picture above there is still a great deal of work to be done. Some time in the future the Park Service hopes to restore the house to its 1864 condition. This will be done through donations from the public. Much of the work, including the guided tours, is done by volunteers of The Friends of Wilderness Battlefield. Being a house of frame construction it is amazing that it has never burned. Very little damage is in evidence from the civil war battles that swirled around it. Some bullet holes have been discovered but the worst damage was done by termites.

"Stonewall" Jackson was injured not far from the house site. Jackson's chaplain was the brother of Ellwood's owner and he took Jackson's arm to the house site and buried it. A monument can still be seen at the location of the grave.



Burial site of "Stonewall" Jackson's arm

The house was used as a hospital during the Civil War battles and the floor upstairs still bears signs of the black paint used to cover the blood stains.

Visitors who want to visit the grounds at Ellwood must sign in and receive a pass at the Chancellorsville Visitor Center. If you have questions about Ellwood or when it is open, call (540) 786-2880. The street address (not a mailing address) for Ellwood is: 36380 Constitution Highway (Route 20), Locust Grove, Va. 22508.



Maury Hanson presents Kemper print to Rita Cunningham

THANK YOU, RITA

The Historical Society's president, Rita Cunningham, has resigned from the Board after serving as President for nine years. Rita and Bob are moving to Louisiana to be near their oldest son.

Under Rita's guidance the Society has prospered. Membership has increased to 144.

Board meetings occur regularly with filing and maintenance of minutes and treasurer's reports. To assume some of the duties of the very able Joan Cheston, Rita established the Kemper Girls, a group of volunteers who maintain the Residence in fine shape. She initiated the well-received Kemper Teas, offered semi-annually as a fund-raiser to support the Society's many on-going projects. She has increased community outreach programs: tours by school classes, open houses for Taste of the Mountains and for Christmas, cooperation with other charitable groups, such as the Garden and Lions Clubs, a Kemper Road Show where experts appraise antiques, and rentals of the Kemper Residence by various county and private groups. She established relationships with other preservation groups, contacting other county historical societies on matters of shared interest, participating in the Piedmont Historical Society and hosting its annual meeting in 2005, and collaborating in various Jamestown 2007 events. Also, under her leadership Historical Society activities in general have increased, with regular hours of operation at the Arcade, where volunteers now staff the desk from 10 to 2 three days a week, where the Society's collections are now being sorted, catalogued and properly preserved, where a functioning security system is now in place, where gift items, including ornaments depicting county buildings or sites, are for sale, where museum exhibits, including the important Strode Collection of Native American Artifacts, are well presented and regularly changed, and where genealogical inquiries are answered.

In addition, Rita has presided over the Society's work in producing a fine newsletter and in obtaining grants for evaluation of the Kemper outbuildings, for restoration of the law office, for establishing proper preservation procedures and for increasing genealogical services.

Other Society members have participated actively in many of these projects, but Rita has been there at the helm for all of them and not only at the helm, but down below decks, working hard to accomplish them. Not surprisingly it is difficult for any one person to take over all her work. Therefore the Board has decided to divide her duties into sections more manageable for those of us with less energy. The office of President will now be shared by two co-

presidents, Bill Scholten and Jane Volchansky. Bill will chair Board meetings and monitor the condition of Kemper House and the Arcade and attend to the security systems. He will, in addition, continue his duties as Treasurer. Jane will be in charge of community outreach programs, scheduling rentals and responding to inquiries. Kemper teas will now be organized by Mary and Bob Haught. It's testament to Rita's effectiveness as President, that several people are required to continue her work.

Members of the Board gathered at the Lafayette Inn in Stanardsville for a luncheon to honor Rita's years of service. For her many contributions to the Society the Board presented Rita with a framed photo of the Kemper House taken by Board member, Tucker Hill.

Rita, thank you for your fine leadership, your good nature, and your warm friendship. We will miss you.



Board member Tucker Hill rides to the Gala

Photo Courtesy D. Richeson/Madison Eagle

THE SLAVE QUARTERS AND THE KEMPER GALA

Our Slave Quarters Restoration Project made its debut on Friday, September 7, with the gala celebration organized by Trish Crowe as a fund-raiser for this Historical Society project and for the Blue Ridge Foothills Conservancy's Stewardship Fund. The evening began with a reception provided by Sue and Mike Riley at the

Madison Inn. Guests then proceeded to Kemper House, led by a surrey driven by Keith Wagner and conveying the guest of honor, Ron Maxwell, along with Trish Crowe and Tucker Hill. Frank Walker, in Confederate uniform, greeted guests at the entrance to Kemper House where an exhibit of Tucker Hill's monotypes was mounted on the main floor. After viewing this exhibit guests proceeded to the back lawn where a large tent had been erected and music was provided by the string trio of Hannah and Ethan Wagner and Jim Thomas. A dinner catered by Beggars Banquet was served in the tent. Penn Bowers of the Historical Society and Carl Schmitt of the Blue Ridge Foothills Conservancy welcomed guests, and after dinner Ron Maxwell, renowned film director, spoke on his acclaimed films, *Gettysburg* and *Gods and Generals*.

On Saturday, September 8, the festivities continued with Kemper House serving as the venue for the annual meeting of the Blue Ridge Foothills Conservancy. Tucker Hill's monotypes were again on display. A barbecue dinner was served and music provided by the Possum Ridge String Band. The speakers were Avery Chenoweth, author, and Robert Llewellyn, photographer, collaborators on the recently published, "Empires in the Forest: Jamestown and the Beginning of America."

The weekend's celebration provided publicity and some funds for the Slave Quarters Restoration Project. To augment this restoration fund the Historical Society is now appealing by mail for financial contributions from its members and from other supporters of Madison County history.

MEMBERSHIP

Ollie Clarke, Gertha Houston, Jeffrey Donn Hughes, and Judith G. Mahanes have become new members of the Society.

We are happy to have you with us and hope you have a rewarding membership experience

ARCADE DISPLAYS

We recently spent some time looking through stacks of materials saved from past exhibits at the Arcade. We found many wonderful pictures of people and places which were located in what is now Shenandoah National Park. There is a temporary display of these photos on the first

floor of the museum. During the coming winter we hope to develop several permanent exhibits-one of which will be about life before the Park. Museum hours: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10am-2pm.

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

The Madison County Historical Museum located at the Arcade will be making several changes. We want to add some more permanent exhibits. To do this we will close to the public during the months of January and February 2008. To begin our plans volunteers will meet Tuesday, November 20, 2007 from 10:00am to 2:00pm. This is a great time to come on board and join in. Newspaper clipping, copying and filing are all on-going tasks. We will continue these sessions in January and February also.

We are extremely happy to report that we added more volunteers this fall. Those coming on board are Ann Ferguson, Ruth Penn, Malice Craig and Gertha Houston. How delighted we are to welcome this additional help. If you would like to join this group please call Emily Williams, Volunteer Coordinator at 825-7503.



Front and obverse view of key chain

MADISON KEY CHAIN

Among the items available for sale in the communities supporting the Jamestown 2007 festivities is a key chain with the 2007 Jamestown logo on one side and "The Legacies of Jamestown: Representative Government, Rule of Law, Free Enterprise" on the other. The Historical Society decided to offer this item for

sale at the Arcade, but to replace the Legacies of Jamestown with the Madison County Courthouse. The company distributing the items for America's 400th Anniversary was happy to work with us. Accordingly, Tucker Hill took a photograph of the courthouse. This was sent to the design studio in South Carolina where an artist rendered the likeness into a form that could be used to construct a die. That work was approved by the Historical Society and one hundred key chains were cast. These are available at the Arcade for \$10 each, mementos not only of America's 400th Anniversary but also of Madison County.

2008 ORNAMENT

The crossroads of Rochelle is the 2008 Ornament. Cost will be \$11.00. Previous ornaments (Courthouse-2002, Kemper Residence-2003, Arcade-2004, Hebron Lutheran Church-2005, Piedmont Episcopal Church-2006, and Chestnut Grove Baptist Church-2007) are also available and may be purchased at the Arcade.

CEMETERIES AND FAMILY GRAVYARDS

The cemetery committee is working hard to pull together the 1st Volume of *Cemeteries and Family Graveyards in Madison County*. This volume will include about 135 cemeteries and over 5500 names and will be printed by the end of this year. Collection of the data for this 1st Volume started back in 1987 and has been carried out by many dedicated people. We know that there are many more cemeteries and graveyards which have not been documented yet. Therefore we are already collecting for a 2nd Volume. We need your help. Please come by the Arcade and check out the data for the 1st Volume. We are trying to correct mistakes and inaccuracies before the final printing. Also, if you have an old graveyard on your land or know of one that we have not found, please come in and tell us about it. We will have Data Collection forms available if you would like to document it yourself or give us detailed directions so that we may visit it.



Kemper Girls

Row 1: Pam Krause, Ann Hughes, Rita Cunningham, Betty Lynn Yowell and Genevieve McLearn

Tow 2: Heidi Sage, Kay Reiss, Beppy White, Jill Schreiner, Maryvonne Longley and Mary Haught

KEMPER GIRLS BID RITA ADIEU

The "Kemper Girls" treated Rita to lunch at Lucio's in Culpeper to honor her for her leadership of this group. The Kemper Girls are responsible for caring for the Kemper Residence. They meet on the last Wednesday of each month to clean. In addition they decorate the home for the holidays. They also sponsor the Kemper Teas which are held twice/year. Sweets, savories, scones, and Kemper House Tea are served. Watch for the spring date in your February newsletter. Mary and Bob Haught will now be spearheading these activities. If you would like to join this fun group or just provide treats for the tea please call Mary at 547-3503.



Portrait of Judge Hay from Arcade Collection

JUDGE HAY'S RECOLLECTIONS (Chapter I continued)

Next to the Gray property was the Methodist Church which is still standing on the same site. A little to the left and back of the church was a small house then owned and occupied by Daniel Fry, it is now the property of Charles Strother. Ben Gray, the then pastor of the Colored Church, lived in the next house, Dale Jefferson lives there now. Next was the home of Mr. John M. Krider, who lived there in 1879, it is now the property of Minor Jackson. I do not remember who lives in the house, which is now owned and occupied by John Jefferson. That was the last house on that side of the street in 1879.

Crossing the street we first come to the blacksmith shop of Edmund Jefferson. Who lived in the houses from there down to the house of John Jentons, I do not remember. The first house on that side of the street which I remember clearly is a small house almost directly opposite the church in which Mr. John W. Collins lived, he afterwards lived in the Vaughn house, now owned and occupied by Dr. W.H. Collins; next to this property was the Evans house, in which Mrs. Evans lived with her daughters, now owned and occupied by Mr. B.M. Bushong. The house next to this property was I think known as the Read house, then unoccupied, it has been pulled down, and on or rather near the site of it Mr. F.P. Smith, Jr., has built a commodious residence in which he lives. The next lot was in those days vacant, but now it has on it the home of Mr. Ford. Then came the home of Mr. Thomas J. Humphreys, which sat flush with the street, recently Mr. W.W. Blankenbaker has torn down the old brick house and built a home on the lot. Across an alley from this lot was the house and lot known then as the Hume lot, here lived Mr. Benjamin Cave. The old house was burned in 1880 I think, and Mrs. W.J. Cave built a house on the lot which is now owned and occupied by Mr. F.P. Smith. Next to this lot was the property which then belonged to Mrs. Read, and was then occupied by Mr. Jacob Lewit, who had a store there. Next to this lot was the Masonic Hall underneath which were two law offices, one occupied by Colonel F.H. Hill and one by Capt. T.J. Humphreys. Adjoining the Masonic Hall was the old Carpenter Hotel, but in 1879 occupied by Mr.

W.J. Cave as a residence. Then came the Courthouse and Clerk's office, set in a yard surrounded in those days by a brick wall. Next was the house of Dr. John W. Taylor, now owned and occupied by Dr. J.N. Clore. Then came the store of W.J. Cave and Co., in those days there had been no change made in it since it was first occupied by Allison Kemper; it was afterwards pulled down by its owners, the heirs of Dr. G.N. Thrift, and the present storehouse was built, which is now occupied by Blankenbaker & Co. On the same lot was a dwelling house attached to the storehouse, then unoccupied, but now a part of Blankenbaker & Co.'s store. Next to this were certain brick buildings belonging to the Thrift heirs; in the one facing the street Rev. T.W. Lewis had a book store, it is now used as the post office; in the other brick buildings Mr. G.W.M. Simms lived. In one of these rooms, Mr. G.R. Thrift has an office.

Next to the Thrift lot was the property then known as the Hume lot, in the house Mrs. R.A. Jackson lived; it is now owned and occupied by Mrs. W.S. Taylor, at that time there was no office in the yard, that office was built by Dr. H.L. Rankin who afterwards owned the property. Adjoining this property was a brick storehouse in which Mr. Larkin E. Jackson conducted a general store; it is now occupied by Mr. Mayette Hoffman. Next was the house and lot of Dr. G.A. Sprinkel, in which Mrs. Salle Thrift now lives. Adjoining this was the Hisle house, in which Mr. Hisle then lived. Then came the Hunton House at that time kept by Mr. John L. Hall, and now with additions and improvements it is kept by Mr. John T. Hall. Across an alley from the Hunton House was a small house belonging to Mr. John L. Hall, in which in those days, was a bar room. Back of this lot was the blacksmith shop and house of John Jacky. Facing the Orange Road which comes into the Blue Ridge Turnpike by the Early house, was the Temperance Hall, now torn down, and on this site is the garage and theater of Mr. T.T. Mitchell.

Next was the residence of Colonel F.H. Hill, now the home of Mr. T.C. Taylor. Then came the Leitch house, then unoccupied, but now the home of Mr. Sam Tucker, and greatly changed and improved. Next was the home of Rev. T.W.

Lewis, now owned and occupied by Mr. Oscar Smith.

Mr. W.F. Harrison lived in the next house, which is now occupied and owned by Mr. John T. Hall. Across the Ruth road from Mr. Harrison's was the house in which Mr. Luther R. Yowell now lives; my recollection is that it was not then occupied. Back of this lot was the Baptist Church, and back of that was the home of the Misses Miller. Mud Road ran by the church and came out into the Blue Ridge Turnpike at the Colored Church. On this road lived a good many colored people, all of whose names I have forgotten. But some of them live there still, Daniel Roe for instance, and Frank Weaver and the family of Jim Payne.

That was the town as I remember it. I may be mistaken in some of my facts, if so I would gladly be corrected.

CHAPTER II THE PEOPLE

When I came to Madison in 1879, the following gentlemen were the officers of the county. R.S. Thoman was clerk of the court, and had held the office for some years; he was a man of unusual native ability; he had an intimate knowledge of the people of the county, knew the history of every family, and was acquainted with every man in the county. He was a loyal friend, had a kind and generous heart, and was ever ready to lend a helping hand to anyone in distress. He was the author of many good deeds of which the world in general knew nothing. His counsel and advice in all the relations of life were much sought after. His native wit and sense of humor made him a delightful companion; his stores of genealogical knowledge, his thorough familiarity with all the localities of the county, his familiarity with the traditions and history of the people made him a most interesting talker and companion. He was born and raised in kinship to the Berry and Finks families, and from his youth up had been engaged in public affairs. When I knew him he lived in the Locust Dale district, and rode from his home to the Courthouse almost daily. While court was in session, and at other times when his duties required his presence at the Courthouse, he stayed at the Madison House, the hotel kept by Mr. McRae Wilhoite.

Mr. William J. Cave was the treasurer of the county, and had held that office from the

adoption of the constitution of the state; he continued to hold it until his death in 1895. Mr. Cave was of distinguished ancestry, his father having been for many years clerk of the county. His ancestors came to this country from England in the early days, and were conspicuous for their services in colonial days. Many of the family lived in Orange County, and were among those who held office in colonial times when the county of Orange was formed from Spotsylvania. On the maternal side Mr. Cave was descended from Alexander McRae, one of our first ministers to England. William J. Cave enjoyed the unbounded confidence of the people of the county. His integrity and his strict attention to the duties of his office gave him a hold upon the good will and affections of the people, which grew greater as time went on. When he first ran for the office of treasurer he had an opponent, but after that, every four years he was elected without a semblance of opposition. He was a man who, not only had the confidence of the people, as a public officer, but in his private capacity he was looked up to by numbers of his fellow citizens. His advice was sought after, and his aid invoked and never in vain. He was loyal to his friends and generous in all cases of poverty and distress. He was a merchant, and occupied the old Thrift storehouse in 1880, which was described in the last chapter. His partner at that time was Mr. Samuel E. Blankerbaker of whom there will be something to say later on.

Captain Thos. J. Humphreys was the attorney for the Commonwealth. He was then a man of nearer seventy than sixty years of age, and had been practicing law at Madison Courthouse since he was first licensed as a lawyer. He was a native of Culpeper County, and was born at Richardsville in that county. Captain Humphreys was also one of the Commissioners in Chancery for the Circuit Court. When I first knew him, he had just come through an election, in which he had been opposed by a young man named Wilkinson, who had only been in the county a short time. The Captain was successful, but never forgave the men who were responsible for Wilkinson's candidacy, and being somewhat irascible, he often said things to them and about them which were very bitter, and oftentimes amusing. He was a conscientious officer, and performed his duties with fidelity.

The Madison County Historical Society is a non-profit organization founded and operated for the perpetuation and preservation of Madison County heritage and traditions. The mission of the Society is to record, preserve, and stimulate interest in the history of Madison County, its families, occupations and way of life.

Membership is for one year with renewals due on the anniversary date of membership. Membership and other contributions to the Society are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Types of Membership:

Sustainer.....	\$500 or more	Business	\$50
Benefactor	\$250 to \$499	Family	\$20
Partner	\$100 to \$249	Single	\$10
Friend	\$50 to \$99	Student	\$5

Membership applications are available at the Arcade and the Kemper Residence. For more information call the Society Office at 540-948-5488 and leave your name, telephone number, and address. We will send you a membership application or return your call to answer your questions.

Madison County Historical Society

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